THE

HAMPSHIRE TRAGEDY:

Shewing how a Servant Maid firſt robbed her Maſter, and was afterwards ſtruck dead for telling a Lie.

A TRUE STORY.

Sold by J. MARSHALL,

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A TRUE STORY.

COME all ye maidens and draw near;
A doleful Song I ſing,
A Song that proves, as you ſhall hear,
A Lie's a fearful thing.

In Hampſhire once there chanc'd to dwell,
Near Meonſtoke's little town,
A farming man, who proſper'd well;
An honeſt country clown.

It was but little he poſſeſs'd,
But then he was content;
He knew no want, could treat a gueſt,
And paid his ſlender rent.

By honeſt induſtry and thrift
He ſav'd a little ſtore;
And thanking God for every gift,
He made that little more.

And now, ſo lofty was his ſtate,
He hir'd a ſervant maid;
Who learning well on him to wait,
In truth was duly paid.

One hundred pounds, a mighty ſum,
He now had ſav'd in all;
And hid it, leſt ſome thief ſhould come,
Safe in his kitchen wall.

At length, advancing far in years,
He calmly view'd his end;
For he need never ſhrink with fears
Whoſe Maker is his friend.

Long time a prey to dire diſeaſe,
Stretch'd on his bed he lay;
His ſervant ſaw him ill at eaſe,
And nurs'd him night and day.

Then Satan, who like beaſt of prey,
"Seeks whom he may devour,"
Did tempt this ſervant maid ſo gay,
All in an evil hour.

He led her firſt to ſee the ſpot
Where lay this hidden pelf;
Then bid her form the wicked plot
To take it for herſelf.

He whiſper'd in her willing ear,
" Go make it all your own;
For ſince your maſter's death is near,
It never can be known."

At once the wicked girl obey'd,
And fear'd no future ill;
Oh, ſtupid, ſinful, ſilly maid!
She dreamt not of a Will.

But had ſhe thought of Him, whoſe eye
Sees all the deeds of man;
In vain the Tempter had drawn nigh,
And urg'd his wicked plan.

The love of gain had warp'd her ſoul,
And drawn her quite away;
To Satan thus, that Tempter foul,
She fell an eaſy prey.

Her maſter dies; but firſt he leaves
By will this hundred pound;
Tells where 'twas hid, for fear of thieves,
And 'twould be ſurely found.

Then went his friends and ſearch'd the chink,
With cloſe and cunning eye;
'Twas gone—but nobody could think
Which way the pelf could fly.

At length the neighbours turn'd a thought
To this unhappy maid;
They ſearch'd her box, the thief was caught,
For there the wealth was laid.

Then, then alas! ſhe vow'd and ſwore,
Appealing oft to Heav'n,
That by her Maſter long before
This ſum was freely giv'n.

Dire curſes oft, with forehead bold,
She call'd down on her head;
And pray'd, if any lie ſhe told,
That God would ſtrike her dead.

She ſpoke—and ſtrait the ſentence paſs'd,
A ſentence ſtrange and rare;
At once the Liar breath'd her laſt,
For Heav'n did hear her prayer.

The friends around beheld with fear
The wretched ſinner fall;
Forc'd in God's preſence to appear
At his moſt awful call.

And now let us, who ſtill are left,
Take warning, old and young!
O, let us hate the ſin of theft,
And dread a lying tongue.

THE END.